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Rambles Farther:

A
CONTINUATION

OF

RURAL WALKS:

IN DIALOGUES.

INTENDED

FOR THE USE OF YOUNG PERSONS.

BY CHARLOTTE SMITH. *K*

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

Printed for T. CADELL Jun. and W. DAVIES,
(Successors to Mr. CADELL,) in the STRAND.

1796.

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LONDON:

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1786.

TO THE
RIGHT HONOURABLE
Lady GEORGIANA CAVENDISH.

MADAM,
THE favourable opinion expressed
by the Duchess of Devonshire,
of the little Work to which this is
a Sequel, induced me to solicit per-
mission to dedicate these Volumes
to your Ladyship.

While I recollect all the acts of
kindness I have experienced from
her Grace, I can find no terms to

express my sense of them, that do not seem to border too much on those of the (frequently insincere) adulation used in common Dedications.

But I certainly advance no more than I believe to be exactly true, when I say, that in enjoying that internal satisfaction which arises from the consciousness of good and benevolent deeds, the Duchess of Devonshire has also the happiness of seeing in her daughter those amiable qualities that have rendered her Grace so greatly beloved by her friends, as well as the boast and ornament of her country.

May

DEDICATION.

v

May it be your felicity, Madam,
to emulate and to reward the ten-
derness of such a mother!

I have the honor to be

Your LADYSHIP'S

most obliged and
devoted Servant,

CHARLOTTE SMITH.

May 16, 1796.

DEAR SIR
May it be your friendly intention
to contribute and so reward the
district of justice which is
I have the honor to be
Yours faithfully
T. J. Harrison

and others and
of the district

CHARLOTTE SMITH

The
Flora
Wen
The
Acco
May

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FIRST VOLUME.

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DIALOGUE I.

THE LITTLE WEST INDIAN.

COLONEL CECIL and his Caroline were settled at a small but beautiful house, situated near the foot of a woody hill, which sheltered it from the unfriendly North East. In front, over a small lawn fringed with shrubs, and shaded by a few venerable beeches, appeared the Channel, and behind were a lofty ridge of chalky downs, enlivened by innumerable flocks of sheep, and in some places varied with woods of ash and beech.

Within an easy morning's ride of his sister, and happy in the improving graces of his daughter, Colonel Cecil seemed to be a man whose situation was to be envied—but his tranquillity was

disturbed by hearing, that Captain Sedley, his most intimate friend, was dead in Jamaica, where he had some years before married and settled; and that to Colonel Cecil he had committed the management of his fortune and that of his three children, two of whom he had ordered to be immediately sent to England, and placed there, as his executor should direct; the other was yet an infant. The letter which contained this intelligence was brought by a negro servant, who informed the Colonel, that he had attended his "young Massa and "little Miss" to London from Portsmouth, where they landed; and that, at the house of the merchant with whom Captain Sedley corresponded, they awaited the Colonel's orders.

However unwilling he was to leave his retirement, this obliged Mr. Cecil to go to London, which, after a short consultation with Mrs. Woodfield, he determined

mined to do immediately, in order to acquit himself towards the memory of his friend, who had entrusted him with so sacred a charge.—Caroline in the mean time remained with her aunt, who in a few days received from Colonel Cecil the following letter:

“ You must advise me, my dear
 “ sister, how to act in regard to my
 “ little wards, for whom I already feel
 “ great anxiety. The boy, a fine little
 “ fellow almost nine years old, has been
 “ so spoiled on one hand and neglected
 “ on the other, that he must be placed
 “ immediately at some proper school,
 “ and I have chosen that where your
 “ younger boys have done so well—but
 “ the little girl is the most interesting
 “ little creature I have ever seen, and I
 “ cannot dispose of her, without having
 “ your opinion—I almost fancy you
 “ would be better pleased, if I were to
 “ bring her down with me, and I know
 “ you

“ you would take the trouble to in-
“ struct my Caroline in the little pre-
“ parations it will be necessary to make
“ for her, if we indeed determine to
“ send her to school. I find that mis-
“ trust of the conduct of his wife, which
“ embittered the life of my poor friend,
“ and, I fear, hastened its close, was the
“ reason of the dying charge he gave to
“ his executor in Jamaica, to send over
“ the two elder children to me imme-
“ diately.—And his correspondent hints
“ to me, that it is highly probable the
“ lady is by this time married again.
“ Advise me, whether to send my little
“ charge to school, or bring her down
“ to West Hill? There is one awkward
“ circumstance attending this latter plan;
“ a black female servant, who brought
“ her up, and from whom it will be
“ very painful to wean her. I should be
“ sorry to undertake this separation
“ myself, and therefore, I fear, Mimbah
“ must

" must accompany us. I expect to hear
" from you by the return of the post,
" and with most affectionate love to all
" the dear girls, I am yours most
" truly,

" G. C——."

Mrs. Woodfield plainly perceived from the purport of his letter, that her brother wished to take into his own house, or that she should receive into her's, the infant daughter of his friend. Ever desirous to gratify him, she answered his letter in such a way as determined him; and in a few days, having first settled her brother at the school, where his younger nephews were, he arrived with his West Indian ward and her black attendant. The beauty and engaging simplicity of the little orphan, Ella Sedley, interested the whole party in her favour, while the affectionate heart of Mrs. Woodfield felt that tender com-

passion, which disposed her to supply to her the place of the mother, who appeared to have abandoned her. She foresaw also much advantage that might accrue to Caroline, from her being entrusted with the care of the little girl, of which she found her extremely desirous. In attending to the œconomy of her dress, to making and repairing the cloaths of her ward, she would learn what would hereafter be solidly useful; and would herself acquire habits of patience and attention, by instructing her in such things as she was capable of learning.

The arrangement then was made, that little Ella should be received into the Colonel's house, and be brought up under the care of Caroline, superintended by her aunt. The two families, though inhabiting different houses, lived almost continually together, and the daughters

daughters of Mrs. Woodfield were as much pleased as their cousin, with this little acquisition to their society.

Ella was now of their morning parties, while they sat round the work-table; she had never been taught to work, and Henrietta undertook to be her instructress; but her patience was put to very severe trials, and little Ella was often contriving how to escape from her assiduous teacher, to slide off to Mimbah, her dear Mimbah, who was so glad to set her upon her knee, and talk to her about "dere own dear country," or when the weather was not cold, saunter with her round the garden, then come shuddering in, and say, which Ella failed not to repeat, "Oh! dis England, col col place!" One morning in early spring, Ella who had been for a walk with her sable nurse, entered with this exclamation, and went trembling to the fire.

Mrs. Woodfield. Does my little Ella

B 4.

then

then wish to leave this cold cold place, and go back to Jamaica?

Ella (sighing). Oh no! not if I was to say "good bye" to you, my good English mamma!

Elizabeth. But you have another mamma, your own mamma there, Ella; and besides, you think it a pleasanter place than this.

Ella. When papa was alive; but Mimbah say now, that poor papa is gone beyond, beyond blue mountains; and Ella never see him no more!

Mrs. Woodfield. And does Mimbah then wish to go back?

Ella. Mimbah love her own country best.

Mrs. Woodfield. You see now, my dear girls, how strong is that habit which attaches even slaves to their native country, and that our ideas of the horrors of that state we call slavery, cannot all be well founded, since this negro woman,

man, who knows that she is free here, who is mistress of her time, and has every thing found for her, without any other work than the little attendance such a child requires, prefers her own country where she was a slave, and liable to be beaten or turned into the field on the caprice of her mistress.

Caroline. How turned into the field?

Mrs. Woodfield. There are different sets of slaves—some are employed, as we employ our servants, for domestic purposes, and are called house negroes; another set are occupied, I am sorry to say, as we employ our horses and oxen; while others are directed, like our carters and plowmen, to drive them. When an house servant misbehaves, it is a frequent punishment to send them into the field, a circumstance so mortifying to their pride, that it has been often known to drive them to despair and death.

Elizabeth. Poor creatures! I am per-

suaded, my dear mamma, that I should be unhappy in that country; I could not bear to see my fellow-creature in such a state.

Mrs. Woodfield. A person brought up there, and accustomed to it, has not the least idea, that these unhappy men are of the same species; they no more feel hurt at seeing them compelled to labour or suffering punishment, than persons in this, not accustomed to *think*, do, when they see a team of horses, or a yoke of oxen, and the driver exercising his whip.

Caroline. And besides the distress it would be to me to see these poor people, I should be overcome with heat, and harassed with the insects.

Mrs. Woodfield. Those are undoubtedly inconveniencies; but there are people who prefer, notwithstanding, the luxuries and consequence they can enjoy in the colonies, to being confounded among

among the crouds of opulent people in England, where they must pay very dear for the necessaries of life, which those who have estates enjoy there in profusion; as to the heat, their houses are calculated to mitigate that inconvenience, and they have contrivances against being annoyed by the reptiles and insects with which all hot countries are infested:—The scenery in many parts of the islands, is extremely beautiful.—In Jamaica there are trees, not only larger and more magnificent than the finest timber in England, but of perpetual verdure; and the forms of the palmeto, the cabbage-tree, and many others, are so unlike what Europeans are accustomed to see, that they give an air of grandeur and novelty to the landscape not easy to describe.—The sea-shore abounds with shells of the greatest variety and beauty, and what, perhaps, would be a much greater

greater recommendation to some persons, with excellent turtle.

Elizabeth. That could be only to epicures, mamma; for they are most disgusting animals to look at. Is it of their shells, that combs and other things of that sort are made?

Mrs. Woodfield. I understand, that the shell of the land tortoise is harder, and takes a much finer polish, but that it is more rare; and the combs, tooth-picks, and other things, we generally use are made of the upper shell of the amphibious tortoise, or turtle.—These frequent the sandy beach of the sea in the West Indies, where they conceal their eggs; and those which escape the various animals that live upon them, are hatched by the heat of the sun.—The eggs resemble a string of little balls, covered with something like leather; and the instant the young turtles escape from

from their confinement, they use their fins to run into the sea; where other enemies, as fish and birds, wait to devour them; so that out of the great number of eggs, which sometimes amount to many hundreds, deposited by a single turtle, not one in ten attains the size which renders them an object to an epicure.

Henrietta. And how are they caught, mamma?

Mrs. Woodfield. When they go on shore to lay their eggs, the negroes, who know the places they frequent, go down to the shore, and, intercepting their flight to the sea, turn them, after which they have no power to use their fins, but remain a defenceless prey, till the persons have collected as many as they can.—Another way of taking them, is by striking them with an instrument called a harpoon, as they float on the water. The air in these tropical regions

gions is so much clearer than in Europe, at least so much more so than the air of England, that objects at a great distance are seen more distinctly than here; and the same difference is observed in regard to the sea—objects are seen many fathom under water with a clearness, such as most limpid streams hardly allow us.

Caroline. Yes, and so those sharks are seen, of which one has heard such frightful stories, particularly one recited in a poem I was reading this morning.

Mrs. Woodfield. You mean that of Bryan and Percene, by a Doctor Grainger.—It is not in my mind an happy subject for a poem; it is too horrible and disgusting.

Henrietta. What are sharks?

Mrs. Woodfield. Very large and frightful fish, which devour not only other fish, but men.—They are most frequent in the tropical seas, but are sometimes
seen

seen in the Bay of Biscay; and small ones have been taken even in the Channel.—These hideous monsters follow the ships which we send to Guinea to convey slaves to our colonies; for of these unhappy men, women, and children, a great number die on their passage, and are thrown into the sea.

Caroline. And what right have we to do this? It is shocking even to think of it.

Mrs. Woodfield. To your young and generous nature it appears so, as it must indeed to every unadulterated mind—but there are persons who undertake to plead for it, on various grounds—first, on that of custom; which is an argument that might equally be brought forward to support any abuse or wickedness: then on necessity; as if God had created one race of men, with necessities which could not be relieved but by the blood and tears of another.—

Then,

Then, it is said, that the negroes are happier, as slaves to Europeans, than they are in their own country.—This remains to be proved; and we can certainly never prove it.—I have conversed with persons who have been present at negro sales, and they have assured me, that so far from feeling themselves happier, these miserable victims of commercial avarice exhibit the most affecting symptoms of despondence and anguish.

Henrietta. But, mamma, why are they black?

Mrs. Woodfield. I can give you no other reason, than that it has pleased God to make them so; as it was his pleasure to make us white.—Another race of men in North America are of a copper colour; and the Asiatics, within certain degrees of the line, are of another shade of yellow.

Caroline. Pedro, my cousin Rivers's servant, whom he brought with him

from the East Indies, is an Asiatic, is he not?

Mrs. Woodfield. Yes, you remember he is not black like Mimbah, nor fair like English people, but of a tawny complexion, with strait coarse black hair; he came from Bengal: but in the northern parts of the Continent of Asia, which is a part of China, the Chinese and Tartars become fair, yet still with a particular cast of countenance.

Elizabeth. But Hottentots are black.

Mrs. Woodfield. Hottentots are Africans. The Cape of Good Hope is in Africa—and the natives differ little from the negroes we are accustomed to see.

Elizabeth. Some of the flowers I have seen in hot-houses, come from these places; that delicious Cape Jasmine, and many others.—How charming the country must be, where such lovely plants grow wild!

Mrs.,

Mrs. Woodfield. We are apt to fancy so, because we cultivate these plants here with difficulty, and value them in proportion to the trouble they give us—but the Hottentot, who perhaps passes by them as frequently as we do by the black-berry and the briar, has not, I believe, the reputation of loving perfumes, and undoubtedly, with the most perfect indifference, makes the little fire he has occasion for, with the wood of plants, which we purchase here at a great expence, and hardly contrive to preserve in a languid existence by the help of artificial heat.

Henrietta. But we, mamma, who love plants, should have pleasure in seeing those, which we admire here in an imperfect state, grow in the perfection which they have in their native climate.

Mrs. Woodfield. I am not sure of that, Henrietta.—I have heard persons
who

who have travelled in the South of Europe, and whose turn of mind led them to such observations, say, that coppices of myrtle, which are frequent there, are by no means beautiful, and that they felt no regret at seeing the peasants of the Mediterranean Islands carrying from these myrtle shades bundles of small faggots, such as we call bavins, in England, to light their fires. The ideas we gather, while we are very young; from poetry or romance, which, like all other ideas acquired at an early period we seldom think of investigating afterwards, make us take it for granted, that myrtle bowers and orange groves are extremely delightful; whereas, by the natives of countries where they are found, they are not valued more than we value our orchards, or our under-wood of ash, oak, and hazle.

Caroline.

Caroline. If then the African or Asiatic see no particular charm in these spicy flowers and rich fruits, what attaches them so much to their country, where they are liable to become the prey of wild beasts, and where, from the accounts I have read, famine often reduces them to the necessity of eating insects and other things, from which one's mind recoils with horror; whence arises that attachment, which, it is said, these savage nations feel, each to their own soil?

Mrs. Woodfield. It seems to be by a wise dispensation of Providence, that this love of our native country is implanted in the human breast—Were it not so, the moment a better climate and country were known, those who were the worst off, would come in crouds and overrun the more fortunate countries, which would thence, be ever the prey of
strength

strength and of necessity—just as the Danes and Norwegians once harassed England with continual incursions, as soon they found that (barbarous and uncultivated as it then was) it was a better land than the more northern regions, where their lot had fallen.

Caroline. I have often thought, in reading the History of England, how strange it is, that the country, which is now superior at sea to all Europe, and safe from the most powerful armies that any other power can raise, should once have been the prey of so inconsiderable a people as the Danes, and have been obliged even to accept kings from that petty nation.

Mrs. Woodfield. The fortunate change is the effect of civilization and of commerce, in which our insular situation, as well as the genius of our people, gives us particular advantages. The prejudices of other European nations have operated

operated as checks to industry and to the spirit of trade. In France, formerly, and still in Germany, Spain, and Italy, a noble family was degraded by any of its branches entering into commerce; and, however rich an individual not born noble, might have become by respectable industry, he was held down by the contemptuous pride of nobility, who still refused alliance with him as a *roturier**.—But, in England, we disdain those narrow prejudices, and perhaps go almost into the contrary extreme, by attaching too much veneration to the possession of mere wealth. However, this capability of aspiring to become members of the legislature, and even to nobility, which is given to our merchants and tradesmen, is one great cause of our commercial prosperity and riches, and forms one among many other reasons why an Englishman is, and ought to be

* Roturier—Breaker of the ground.

attached

attached to his country.—With him it is not only natural, but acquired, by the reflections he is continually able to make on the advantages he enjoys; but with the ignorant and unlettered savage it seems to be instinct. The Laplander, who, in his own miserable climate, lives half the year in a subterraneous cave, to shelter himself from its rigour, and passes that period in darkness as well as cold; who supports his squalid frame by the smoked flesh of rein deer; drinks train oil; and whose summer travels are over deserts, which afford little else but a particular kind of leathery moss; this wretched being, to whom, in our opinion, nature seems to have behaved like a cruel step-mother, is yet so unhappy in being removed from his inhospitable country, that he sickens and pines to death amidst the comforts and plenty of England.—The same predilection acts on the Hottentot native of the Cape: there

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have

have been many instances of these people having been taken when very young by the European settlers on their coast, taught to read and write, and instructed in such other arts as contribute to the comforts of life; yet, after all this pains bestowed upon them, they have seized the first opportunity to escape, and returned to the society of their Hottentot relations.—It is this instinct which makes poor Mimbah languish for her yams and plantains, even in a country where she was a slave. To us, who look upon these people as savages, it seems strange; but without a more deep investigation, we may account for it by recollecting how natural it is for the mind to look back with complacency on those scenes where we first became sensible of our existence—where that existence was unclouded by the cares and solitudes of our more advanced years, while the opening world seemed to smile upon us, and,

and, if we were sensible of sorrow, it was only of that sort which produces

“The tear forgot as soon as shed.”

Such scenes always recur to us with delight, and we often fancy that in returning to them, we should again be happy. Alas! it is not always so—Experience breaks this charm as well as many others; I will one day or other relate to you some passages in the life of a person with whom I am well acquainted, that will, perhaps, put this truth in a very striking light.

In the mean time, as little Ella has been the occasion of our carrying our conversation to so many quarters of the world, I beg, that before we go for our morning's walk, you will find on the globe the different countries of which we have been speaking. And let us from this lesson reflect, that what we call happiness depends, after all, less on local

circumstances than on the habits of our minds.

- “ For where to find the happiest spot below
“ Who can direct, when all pretend to know?
“ The shuddering tenant of the frigid zone
“ Boldly proclaims the happiest spot his own—
“ Extols the treasures of his stormy seas,
“ And his long night of revelry and ease.—
“ The naked Indian panting at the line,
“ Boasts of his golden sands and palmy wine;
“ Basks in the glare, or stems the tepid wave,
“ And thanks the gods for all the good they gave.
“ Such is the patriot’s boast: where’er we roam,
“ His first best country ever is at home.”

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her, when I heard a single rap at the door, given with a timidity which made me believe it was some humble solicitor for charity. Mrs. Berkley, whose purse is ever open to the plea of distress, has, of course, many of these petitioners, and having but little time for discrimination, she is sometimes mistaken in the objects of her bounty. I have on other occasions remarked, that her servants, and particularly an old butler who has lived above thirty years in the family, are not unfrequently rude and insulting to these candidates for the bounty of their mistress; not only, perhaps, because they give them trouble, but because they intercept part of that generosity which would otherwise be enjoyed exclusively by themselves.

As I make it a rule never to interfere with the domestic arrangements of my friends, I forebore to remark to Mrs. Berkley what I had observed; though, as
I went

I went to London merely on business, and was often at the house of my friend alone, when she was engaged abroad, I had seen instances of this unfeeling conduct in several of her servants, particularly this maitre d'hotel, which occasioned me to attend with earnestness to the following dialogue; after a very humble rap at the door, and a surly inquiry from the porter as to what the person wanted, who appeared at it, and who asked if Mrs. Berkley was at home—

Porter. No, she is not at home.

Young Woman. Pray, Sir, do not shut the door, but be so humane as to tell me when I can speak to her?

Porter. Not to-day, mistress; for she won't be at home till five o'clock—and she won't see nobody of an afternoon.

Young Woman (with a deep sigh). Pray, Sir, give me leave to ask if there is

not a gentlewoman within that I could speak to?

Porter. No, my pretty dear; the gentlewoman is gone to market, and won't be within these two hours.

Young Woman. A gentleman, perhaps, who spoke to me the last time I called: a Mr. Higgs—

The Porter now, laughing aloud, called to Higgs, who coming up, I heard the other tell him there was a pretty girl waiting for him in the hall.

His answer was not articulate, but when he spoke to the poor petitioner, I soon heard enough of his rude and brutal manner of treating her, to induce me to interfere. She was going from the door in tears, when I hastily followed her, and, without attending to the account by which Higgs would have directed my inquiry, I desired her to accompany me into the parlour.

The

The poor girl trembled so much that she could hardly stand; and her tears seemed to be checked by fear and agitation. I enquired whether I could not act for Mrs. Berkley in her absence, and how I could render her service?

She answered, with great modesty, that Mrs. Berkley had been repeatedly very good to her, and had been pleased to promise that she would still befriend her in the disposal of some trifles of her own work, by making which she endeavoured to support her brothers and an infant sister; "for we are, madam," said she, "a family of orphans."

Tears, which she had restrained while I talked to her, now streamed from her eyes; I bade her be comforted, with the assurance, that not only Mrs. Berkley would befriend her, but that I also, though my power was less, should have great satisfaction in assisting the success of her virtuous industry for so pious a purpose.

purpose. The poor young girl seemed greatly re-assured by what I said, and attempted to regain composure enough to relate to me the particulars I required of her, but she failed; and it was only by repeated questions that I learned all the circumstances of her melancholy history.

Her father was a lieutenant in an Highland regiment, and at the commencement of the war had quitted the humble retirement in which he managed to exist on his half-pay; and being soon after sent abroad, had been wounded; not so severely as to disable him from service, but so as to oblige him to return home. A fever seized him in London; and, being at a good distance from his native country, from his wife and children, his spirits were so much depressed, that he sunk into a sort of torpid melancholy, and the military surgeon who attended him declared, that
he

he must either go to his native country, or risk dying by the most lingering and cruel of all distempers. The state of his health, and of his finances, equally disabled him from undertaking such a journey. He knew it was altogether as much impossible for his wife and children to come to him, and therefore he concealed from them the truth, and determined to die in silence.

A Scotch soldier, however, who, with better fortune than his officer, had found an asylum in Chelsea Hospital, contrived to find him out, and as poor Maccarryl had been greatly beloved in the regiment, this honest veteran was struck with horror at seeing him reduced to such a condition; not having the power to assist him himself, the only expedient he could think of was, to write into Scotland, to inform some of his own friends of Lieutenant Maccarryl's situation, and desiring they would in-

form his wife how ill he was. The poor woman, with Flora, who was the eldest of her children, two little boys and a girl of five years old, set out immediately on their long and melancholy journey; with the utmost difficulty they reached the end of it, where they found the unhappy husband and father in a languishing and almost hopeless illness; his pay was already mortgaged to the agent; his family had disposed of every thing to procure the means of reaching him from so great a distance; and being now in a place where every necessary of life is so dear, with a family of six persons and the chief support of it suffering under a cruel illness, a more deplorable situation could hardly be imagined.

Two of Lieutenant Maccarryl's military friends, who, notwithstanding his endeavours to suffer silently, discovered his wretched circumstances, exerted themselves to the utmost of their power

on

on his behalf, and the distress of the family was for a while mitigated. But the illness of Maccarryl had made too great a progress; the advice he had obtained came too late, and, within six weeks after the arrival of his family, he died.

His two friends were by this time returned to the seat of war; so that the helpless widow was among strangers, at a great distance from her home and country, unused to every kind of business, and ignorant how to proceed even in obtaining the small pension allotted for the widows of officers. This however was obtained, but how were they to live till the first quarter was payable? Mrs. Maccarryl, though disposed to every exertion, knew nothing of those arts by which in a great city a living may be obtained. The daughter of a soldier, she had passed her youth in going with her parents from one place to another;

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and in such an itinerant course little can be acquired beyond reading and writing. It might however have been expected that, from her early experience of a life attended with difficulty, she would have learned firmness of mind, to contend with it now. But unhappily the reverse was the case; Mrs. Maccarryl was as helpless, and as much dispirited by her present calamity, as if she had been always accustomed to ease and prosperity. Her health suffered from the sad state of her mind, and Flora saw her declining every day without having any means to help her, or knowing one friend in London to whom she could apply for advice or assistance.

In this exigence, and with the care of her two brothers and her infant sister greatly depending on her, poor Flora found that she must either exert herself, or see her mother and these poor little ones exposed to the severest inconveniencies.

niencies. In walking about London she observed the artificial flowers that are exposed at the shop windows for sale, and she fancied she could make them. But she had neither instruction nor materials. A very few of these last she purchased with all the money she could raise by the sale of a ring given her by her godmother in Scotland. The want of the former her own ingenuity supplied; and supplied so well, that she sold her first little bouquet at a warehouse in Oxford-street for seven shillings. Instead however of applying her gains to any present purpose, she laid out half in buying some faded flowers at the same shop, with a design to take them to pieces as a lesson, both as to their make and the articles of which they were composed; and with the other half of the money she purchased materials for the stock in trade.

Her

Her mother, now discovering that she could be of some use, tried to learn the art also, and, by continual practice, they acquired such facility and neatness that their work began to repay them. The first payment of the little pension became due, and the unfortunate mother looked round upon her children with an heart less desponding.

But to those who labour only to live, and live but while they can labour, sickness is doubly calamitous. It was now the middle of summer. The boys, one of nine, the other of seven years old, went to a cheap day-school near the small lodging they inhabited in one of the new streets near Tottenham-court-road; here they caught the measles, and before they recovered, it was communicated not only to their little sister, but to poor Flora, and, what was still more alarming, to their mother.

The

The children recovered very slowly, but this cruel disease had entirely put a stop to Flora's manufacture; who, ill and enfeebled as she was, had been the principal nurse to the whole family; but fatigue and the distemper together had nearly overcome the strength of her mind and of her frame: of herself however she had not much time to think, whatever she might suffer, for her mother became alarmingly ill; the remains of the disorder she had struggled through, hung about her, and it was soon too evident that it had fixed upon her lungs. The apothecary who attended her declared, that she had no chance of recovering unless she immediately removed into the country. Flora struggled very hard to obtain this. The people who had now for some time been in habits of purchasing artificial flowers of her, had discernment enough to see the merit of so much fortitude

and industry in so young a woman; and, though to bestow pecuniary assistance is a thing seldom or never thought of by persons in such a line of life, however affluent they may happen to be, the master of the shop undertook to make their case known to a woman of great fortune in the neighbourhood, who was pleased to have it known that she gave away great sums in charity to individuals as well as to public institutions. This lady took up the cause of Mrs. Maccarryl and her family with so much zeal, that the heart of Flora overflowed with gratitude; the mother and the children were removed to neat lodgings at Chelsea, and the lady came herself to see her, left five guineas, and desired to hear occasionally how she went on, for which purpose Flora had a direction to the country-house about seventy miles from London, whither their benefactress had retired.

But

But neither change of air, nor any other remedy, could conquer the fatal disease which had fixed itself on Mrs. Maccarryl; it gained upon her with more and more rapidity, till about two months after her removal she also died, a few days before her pension became due; and Flora found herself and the orphan children without any dependence but on the bounty of her new friend; for during the latter part of her mother's illness, her manufacture was necessarily suspended.

Imagine, my children, what must have been the situation of this poor unfortunate girl. Half dead with grief, and worn down with fatigue, she hung over the remains of her dead parent, for whom she knew not where to find the means of performing the last sad offices; and, in an agony little short of despair, looked round on the three destitute children, for whose wants, even of the

the passing day, she knew not how to provide.

In this extreme distress, she wrote to the lady to whose bounty she had already been obliged; and flattered herself she would receive from her some alleviation of this insupportable situation; but time passed, and no answer came to her petition. I will not relate at length a series of horrors which could not fail to give you all too much pain. Flora saw her last parent consigned to a parish grave, and with her helpless brothers and sisters around her, felt the want of the necessaries of life; in vain she applied at the warehouse where she had formerly been known, and from whence she had been recommended to the favor of Mrs. N——. The master was gone on a long tour among his customers, the mistress to Margate for her health, and the shopman, who was left in charge of their affairs, had not a single

single idea that did not relate to the value of pounds, shillings, and pence; he hardly listened therefore to the unhappy girl, but treated her as a common beggar, and bade her trouble him no more.

The woman of the house where they had lodged, thought she had already done too much in permitting these desolate orphans to stay so long under her roof, and being now afraid of getting, as she expressed herself, "into trouble," she talked of compelling them to leave her house. Flora, amidst all this penury, distress, and anguish, had again recourse to her little manufacture, and she was going with what she had thus found courage to make to dispose of them at the usual place, when she passed the coach of Mrs. Berkley, just as she was stepping into it; and from a sudden impulse, which has since appeared to her most providential, she ventured to approach

approach and silently offer the flowers she had in a little box to the inspection of my friend; who, struck with their superiority to those wares that are usually sold in the streets, was induced to notice the unfortunate vender of them. The relief thus obtained rescued Flora from the despair into which she was falling, but Mrs. Berkley, who lives in a continual round of company, does not allow herself so much time to exercise her own judgment as she certainly ought to do; and, leaving the disposal of the money she gives away in charity too much to her upper servants, I fear her benevolence is often intercepted and often misapplied. Flora, however, had found another friend or two who occasionally assisted her, and among whom a little subscription was set on foot, to send her and the innocent companions of her misfortunes back into Scotland, where they were assured of an asylum among
the

the relations of their parents. At this period it was that chance threw her in my way. It is unnecessary to relate what I did effectually to assist her; my late uneasiness was occasioned by the apprehensions I had, that I had not succeeded altogether so well as I hoped for; but I have now the satisfaction of knowing, that the orphan family are all settled among their friends, and Flora, for whom I was particularly interested, received by a lady, whose well-regulated benevolence leaves me nothing more to wish for on her account.

This little melancholy narrative has, I fear, nothing uncommon in it. I have related it less because it contains any thing extraordinary, than because it gives me occasion to make some remarks that may be useful to you.

The active industry of this unfortunate girl, which was probably the means of saving her family from famine, is a proof,

proof, that there is hardly any situation in which our own exertions may not be used with some effect, and that we ought never to abandon ourselves to despair.

It was not merely, that by this attempt she procured some alleviation to the distresses of her family; the advantage she obtained went much farther. Her ingenuity recommended her to the notice of those, who at length effectually assisted her, but who would not have known her calamities but for this proof how well she bore them; and here I must add, that in my inquiries into Flora's sad history, I saw much cause to lament, that those, who have the power and the inclination to befriend the unhappy, too frequently content themselves with affording some pecuniary assistance, and then are satisfied that they have done their duty: but how many cases are there, where good may
be

be done in other ways than by merely giving money? To counsel the ignorant, to point out proper sources of industry, to protect the desolate orphan, and console the wretched widow, requires indeed time and patience, which the rich and the fortunate, who live in the unceasing pursuit of pleasure and dissipation, are seldom disposed to give: but such acts of humanity are in every body's power, and may be executed by those who have, and by those who have not the means of adding to them relief in money. This it is to be, indeed, "eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame."

Elizabeth. I am glad, my dear mamma, that we did not know any thing of poor Flora's history till her distresses were over; it would have made us likewise unhappy.

Mrs. Woodfield. You would not therefore have shrunk from it, I hope?

Elizabeth.

Elizabeth. I hope not, mámma, if I could have done any good.

Mrs. Woodfield. I am sure you would not; but as you could not at this distance have been of use to the poor girl, I did not before mention her story.

Elizabeth. Was Miss Berkley active about it?

Mrs. Woodfield. Miss Berkley, the only child of very affluent parents, and educated in a style equal to the rank she is probably destined to fill in society, is too far removed from the possibility, as it now seems, of ever feeling any kind of pecuniary distress to make it easy for her to enter into the feelings attendant on the situation of this desolate girl; yet habitually, and as she has been taught, she willingly gives her money, but would think it a strange thing were she to be asked to take any trouble for the objects of her charity: perhaps

perhaps it is only by adversity that we are taught truly to feel for others. You recollect those beautiful lines of Gray; in that exquisite ode where he supposes Virtue to have been educated in that hard school, he says,

“ Stern rugged nurse! thy rigid lore
“ With patience many a year she bore;
“ What sorrow was, thou bad’st her know,
“ And from her own she learn’d to melt at others’ woe.”

But those who are born in the lap of affluence and nursed by unvarying prosperity, particularly, I think, those young women who, like Miss Berkley, are the only children of their parents, are so little used to submit even to those petty vexations and disappointments which other girls unavoidably meet with, that how people feel whose whole life is a series of sorrows and of sufferings can never occur to them. It was observation on the usually selfish character of these spoiled minions of fortune, that extorted

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from

from Dr. Johnson a sarcasm on heiresses, when he said, "whenever I see an escutcheon of pretence on a coach, I am sure misery is found within it." I think, however, that this, like all other general reflections, are wrong; and I know instances of hearts whom no affluence could spoil.

On the other hand, one cannot fail remarking, as in the case of Mrs. N——, that there are persons who do good less for its own sake than to have their beneficence talked of. I have since heard that this lady is more delighted with the praise she acquires than with that internal satisfaction which arises from the consciousness of doing good. She rather seeks, therefore, variety of objects than follows with systematic kindness her benevolence towards a few. This is an error which the truly generous and charitable will avoid.

DIALOGUE III.

WONDERS.

A FRIEND of Mrs. Woodfield's was ordered to the sea at a very early period of the spring, and she was induced to visit her for a few days, accompanied by her two daughters and Ella Sedley.

Every object now bore a different appearance from that which had struck their observation the preceding autumn; the soft showers of April fell on the blue and unruffled bosom of the expanse of water, and the fishers fearlessly employed themselves in procuring from the tranquil element that variety of fish, which advance with summer into the northern seas.

A slender vegetation began to clothe the rocks, except those that presented a rugged face of perpendicular chalk, in the excavations of which innumerable sea-birds were rearing their young. In one of their morning walks, little Ella, gambolling before them, returned with an handful of coarse shells which she had picked up, and desired Henrietta to keep them for her, and when they returned home, that she would put them among some others, which had been brought from the West Indies.

Henrietta. Oh! these are not worth saving, my dear Ella; I never saw any very pretty shells at this place; and mamma says, there are none on the coast.

Mrs. Woodfield. None that are ever collected by the virtuosi in these things, and few, if any, that are even fit for the something that is called grotto-work, with which false taste has some-

times

times dressed up garden seats or alcoves. The beautiful shells which you see in collections, and of which Ella has a few, come from the East and West Indies, and they have all names, though I do not at present remember them, by which the collectors of such things know how to appreciate their value. I think I have heard that there is a shell of which only two specimens are known in the world, and for one of these, I know not how many thousand pounds were given.

Elizabeth. What can give to such things so much value?

Mrs. Woodfield. That sort of caprice which gives an imaginary value to so many other things, even less pleasing than these beautiful productions of nature; such as antique coins or old manuscripts, which can tell us nothing we do not know already, and have no other merit than their scarceness or antiquity.

Henrietta. But shells, mamma, are extremely pretty. I saw some at the Museum that seemed to be made of green and gold enamel.

Mrs. Woodfield. You did so; and of an enamel infinitely finer than any human artist can produce; there are others marked in various colours with a regularity, delicacy, and softness that painting can hardly imitate, and they are more beautifully polished than the finest porcelaine.

Henrietta. Why then, mamma, do you seem to condemn those who have a taste for collecting them?

Mrs. Woodfield. I condemn every one who suffers any taste of this sort to injure their fortune, or who makes a serious pursuit of what ought, at best, to be but an occasional amusement. To contemplate such objects as the minute works of nature, and to admire the skill of the divine artist, which is as
equally

equally shewn in the freckles of a polished shell as in the greatest and most stupendous of his works, is the true end of our observation on such things, not the false pride of possessing them because they are rare. A thinking mind, on surveying one of these little convolved palaces lined with pearl, is carried forward to reflections on the habits of the small half-animated creature for whose residence it was fitted: I say half-animated, because testaceous fishes have little more perception than vegetables, and seem to form the link between the animal and vegetable world.

There is a stationary, half-existing substance adhering to rocks and stones, which has been called the animal flower. In a cavern in the Island of Barbadoes there are some of these of singular beauty, and they are probably to be found in other parts of South America. These are, I suppose, of the same nature

nature as what we here call the Polypus or Sea-anemoné, and of which you may find some of various sizes and colours among the sea-weeds that grow in the excavations of rocks, covered at high water by the tide; they bear no very distant resemblance to an anemoné, and what looks like the fringed petals of that flower are the feelers, or arms, which this fish, having no power to move from the rock, to which it is attached, unfolds to gather its prey.

Elizabeth. But what prey can be taken by such little feeble fibres resembling the small leaves of a flower?

Mrs. Woodfield. Infinitely minute insects which float in the salt water, and probably are so small as to elude the examination of the microscope. On these too, it is probable, the small shell-fish subsist, whose habitations have been the subjects of our admiration. These beautiful shells, the lustre of which
mocks

mocks the most elaborate efforts of art, are formed by the exuding of the bodies of the fish within them; this you may comprehend by remarking that, under the hard armour of the lobster, there is a mottled skin very nearly resembling it; which by degrees hardens into a new shell. It is the same with these shell-fish, whose deserted houses ornament the cabinet of the virtuoso.

Elizabeth. I have often imagined to myself what strange and curious things there must be collected at the bottom of the sea.

Mrs. Woodfield. Shakespeare, you know, tells us so in one of Aerial's songs, as well as in that horrible but well-wrought description of drowning which he gives to the unfortunate Clarence in Richard the Third.

Elizabeth. I think, mamma, that were I to write a fairy tale, in which all

manner of improbable fancies might be put, I would make the scene of it at the bottom of the sea, and describe a palace built of coral and agate, and wainscotted with beryl, mother pearl, and tortoise-shell.

Mrs. Woodfield. Very prettily fitted up indeed! But what is a palace without a garden? and would not your fancy be distressed to imagine bowers and shrubberies and arbors composed of those ill-coloured, trailing, marine vegetables, which are thrown upon the shore in heaps after a succession of stormy weather?

Elizabeth. They are not very pretty, certainly. I believe I must keep to the pearls, amber, and coral furniture within; yet many of the sea-weeds are not ugly, and you have told me that there are some among them which are curious.

Mrs.

Mrs. Woodfield. Well! after having raised your coral pavilion, and surrounded it with

"The shell-work garden and the sea-fan bowers," how would you people it? You must call for the Nereids and Syrens of the poets, since, I fear, the real inhabitants of the sea are very unfit for so elegant a mansion, unless we give credit to the venerable chronicler Sir Richard Baker, who, in the summary account of strange events, relates very gravely, that once in the reign of Richard the Second, and again in that of Edward the Fourth, certain creatures resembling men were taken in nets by the fishermen; one of these, he says, lived many months with his captors, feeding on fish, "*but Spake never a word;*" and both, I think, took the earliest opportunity of gliding away to their native element.

Henrietta. But there are no such things, mamma? there never were such things?

Mrs. Woodfield. I believe there never were; yet that such phenomena have been seen has been positively asserted; and by persons who probably believed it themselves. Not many years ago a fisherman, going to take up the pots in which prawns and lobsters are caught, among some low rocks that are scattered along the shore near a village called Bignor on the coast of Sussex, retreated from them in extreme terror, and made the best of his way back to his comrades; declaring, with fear and astonishment, that he had seen a mer-man, which, sitting on the rocks, looked steadily upon him till he came near enough to discern what it was, and then plunged into the water. The man, upon being repeatedly questioned, persisted in the same story, and as no possible reason

could

could be given for his telling a falsehood, the more enlightened of his hearers concluded, that what he had seen was a seal or sea-calf. The seal is an amphibious animal; they live among rocks on the margin of the sea, and there are many on the coasts of Cornwall; they are the same species of creature, but not so large, as the sea-lions, of which you remember a print in Lord Anson's Voyage. Our circumnavigators saw vast flocks of them on their several voyages; and they were killed by the sailors for the sake of the oil, of which almost their whole unwieldy bodies are composed. From the engraved representation of these animals I can easily suppose, that when raised upon its fore feet, and half concealed by the rugged projections of the rocks, fear and ignorance, combined with uncertainty, might easily convert one of them into a mer-man, or some surprising creature inhabiting the
mighty

mighty waters. These seals are very ugly, mis-shapen animals; they are described as assembling in great numbers, and wallowing in the sea ouse and among the weeds on the shore, with hideous howlings and gruntings. Such, my Elizabeth, are by no means fit for your fairy, sub-marine palace, and in this, as in many other things, we are almost unwilling to give up the pleasant fables, with which our imagination has been enchanted and amused, for sad reality. Thus the world, when we first enter it, seems to be peopled with such beings as we have read of in books of amusement, which are often more calculated to mislead the fancy than to correct it; we build palaces of agate and jasper, and people them with the most amiable beings; but a little experience sometimes convinces us, how unlike its real inhabitants are to these creatures of the imagination.

Elizabeth,

Elizabeth. Oh! my dear mamma, you spoil my fairy palaces, both on land and in the sea; I sometimes think I had rather read fictitious tales, though I know them not to have even a resemblance of truth, than history, which is nothing in general but a melancholy account of the crimes some wicked men have been guilty of, to destroy other men not less wicked than themselves.

Mrs. Woodfield. And yet you must recollect, that in stories, whether those in which the imagination of the author overleaps the bounds of nature and common sense, or those which are called romances, and novels, (which are meant to represent beings like ourselves, and the probable incidents of human life,) there are always some wicked people, who, by thwarting and persecuting the favourite characters, form the distress of the piece. Thus in fairy tales you have an ogre or a genie, who parts your fair princess

princess from her gallant lover, and in the shape of a griffin or a dragon makes proposals for himself, and shuts the unfortunate damsel up in a tower of brass or of adamant. In novels, this mischief-working character is supplied by an uncle or a guardian, sometimes by a father or a mother, or by a powerful rival, who, with little more probability than if a griffin or a mer-man was introduced, carries away the luckless beauty to an inaccessible, and perhaps an haunted castle.

Elizabeth. And yet, mamma, it is not always the most improbable of these sort of histories that amuse the least.

Mrs. Woodfield. Certainly not; the dramas of Shakespeare, which represent fairies and supernatural agents, such as Aerial and his companions, are by no means the least entertaining of his astonishing productions. If I could be amused with the book called the Arabian Nights,

Nights, it would be with those parts of it that are the most wild and improbable. Part of the pleasure we feel from these fictions arises from our love of the marvellous, and part from the agreeable recollection of the stories we used to listen to in the happy days of our childhood. You, Elizabeth, have been rather taught to see every object around you as it really is, than to be either pleased or frightened by the fables which, when I was in the nursery, were admitted there. I have often remembered, as I have since passed a clear stream that crosses a road not far from the house where I lived in my infancy, that when I was four or five years old, I was taught to look there for silver horse-shoes, which my nursery-maid told me were dropped by the elfin cavaliers in their hasty passage over the brook. Round a very old thorn in a neighbouring park, was a spiral line,

line, which I know now to be the effect of lightning, but which I was then taught to believe was the mark left by the magic girdle of a fairy, who had tied to that tree a certain countess, the inhabitant of the great house in the park, who had on some occasion offended her.

“The tester’d slipper, and the circled green,” are now no longer the foundation of our children’s books. The moonlight revels of the trains of Oberon and Titania are heard of no more; they are gone with all their pleasing train of images, as well as the spectres that rattled their chains through almost every old mansion-house, and the signs and tokens with which weak minds anticipated or encreased the too certain evils of life.

But I know not how, Elizabeth, we have wandered from coral alcoves and arbors of shell-work to legends of goblins and fairies. Our conversation, however, is not wholly incongruous with
the

the element before us; for there is no class of men more addicted to fantastic superstition than sailors. At once daring and timorous, they rush undauntedly upon the most dangerous service; yet have certain fears, which some of them cannot conquer, as to the ill effects of drowning a black cat. A malignant spirit, whom they call Davy Jones, is supposed to be the agent of the devil, and to be armed with the power of doing them mischief by tempest, lightning, sunken rocks, and leaks in their ships: yet I never heard that in the hour of battle, when the very foundations of the sea must tremble under the dreadful concussion of heavy artillery on its agitated surface, this mischievous spirit is ever thought of. Then, with the most implicit faith in predestination, they rush unconcernedly on dangers, which to those never accustomed

tomed to such scenes appear to be certainly destructive. So much is man the creature of prejudice and of habit!

To habit too it is owing, that we enquire so little into what is always present to us, and that our reflections are seldom awakened but by novelty. Assertions or stories we hear every day, we never think of objecting to, however absurd they may be; on objects continually before our eyes, we never think of making remarks.

In looking over this immense collection of water, which is expanded till it seems to unite with the distant sky, you, my dear Elizabeth, were struck with its grandeur and sublimity, and your imagination immediately went forth to the wonders contained in its bosom. This happens because you are not accustomed to see it; but the fisherman and the sailor who live upon it, or the peasant

peasant who feeds his sheep on the high downs that overlook it, see nothing extraordinary in it, and are amazed that any one else does. These persons, unused to make reflections of any kind, see nothing to admire either in the changes of the earth on which they walk, or in its innumerable productions. A labourer, of whom you should enquire why the boughs are suddenly cloathed with leaves, would answer "because it is spring." He has no idea of the annual revolution of the earth, nor how on its approach towards the sun the green blood of the plants begins to circulate, and their leaves to expand, which during the severe weather are enclosed each in its hybernacle or winter cradle, which are those red buds that we observe on trees immediately after the leaves of the preceding summer are fallen. It is of this

this wonderful contrivance of Almighty wisdom, that Cowper speaks :

“ He marks the bounds that winter may not pass,
 “ And blunts his pointed fury ; in its case,
 “ Ruffet and rude, folds up the tender germ,
 “ Uninjured, with inimitable art ;
 “ And, ere one flowery season fades and dies,
 “ Designs the blooming wonders of the next.”

But of these and many other operations of nature, though they hourly, weekly, and yearly pass before his eyes, the unenlightened villager has no knowledge ; yet ignorant of the cause, he regularly expects the effect, as a man, whose living depends on the sea or on the traffic upon great rivers, knows perfectly well when to look for high tides, though it probably never entered his head to consider the phenomenon that produces them ; and were you to ask him about them, he would (it is most likely) answer, “ that there always were high tides at

certain times of the moon's change," and with that solution he is content. But those, my Elizabeth, who have greater opportunities of information, and more leisure for reflection, learn to look up with greater reverence and admiration towards the great first cause, who has spread before us, whithersoever we turn, the wonders of his wisdom, and who undoubtedly meant them all to contribute to the happiness of that being, on whom, among all his creatures, he has bestowed the greatest portion of reason.

But the length, and perhaps the gravity of our conversation has occasioned Henrietta to forsake us, and to follow Ella among the rocks in search of shells and sea-weeds. It is time to recall them, and to return home.

DIALOGUE IV.

THE EARLY JOURNEY.

CERTAIN family occurrences had carried Colonel Cecil and his daughter to London; and the same business occasioned his sending for his sister to meet him there.

Though unwilling to quit the country at a season when every hour produced some new beauty, yet as her children's interest and her brother's wishes united to determine her, she conquered whatever reluctance she felt, and proposed to avail herself of this opportunity to procure for her two daughters, instructions in some branches of education, which can no where be obtained so well as in a great capital.

They

They settled then to take leave of the friends they were visiting the preceding night, and at an early hour the next morning to depart on their journey to London.

In pursuance of this resolution they arose before the sun, and while their servants were arranging the baggage, and other matters were settling, the mother, her two daughters, and her little ward, went down to the shore to observe that glorious object, which is no where seen in so great perfection, the rising sun.

Mrs. Woodfield took occasion to remark the accuracy of Gray's description, to which, though he says "it makes no figure on paper," little can be added. "I set out," says he, "one morning before five o'clock, the moon shining through a dark and misty autumnal air, and got to the sea-coast

time enough to be at the sun's levée. I saw the clouds and dark vapours open gradually to the right and left, rolling over one another in great smoky wreaths; and the tide (as it flowed in gently on the sands) first whitening, then tinged with gold and blue; and all at once a little line of insufferable brightness, that (before I can write these five words) was grown to half an orb; and now to an whole one too glorious to be distinctly seen."

In reminding her children of this sublime spectacle, Mrs. Woodfield added — "How many people there are, my dear girls, who have passed their lives without having ever seen it! How many others, who, if they ever have witnessed it, have only done so by chance in returning from some place of public amusement, with aching heads and exhausted spirits! Of such a party I remember
I once

I once was; when, after a masqued ball given at the house of a nobleman in the country, the sun arose, dazzling with all his summer splendor our half-shut eyes. We soon unclosed them quite to admire the strange figures we made, and, I believe, some among us, who piqued themselves on their good looks, did not bear the remarks of others without sensations somewhat bordering on those of Milton's arch-friend; and might have said

“Sun! I tell thee how I hate thy beams.”

For my part, I felt something like shame for making one in a group so ill suited to the scene; for our wretched, jaded, and dishvelled figures, unpowdered locks, hollow and haggard eyes, and tinsel finery, polluted with smoke and dust, formed a decided and mortifying contrast with the pure brilliance of the rising orb; the crystal dew bespangling

bespangling every leaf, and that reviving elasticity of the air,

“The breath of heaven fresh blowing pure and sweet

“With day-spring born *.”

Elizabeth. I suppose, however, mamma, that there are many people who never saw the sun rise, unless on some such occasion.

Mrs. Woodfield. Probably not; in this climate, indeed, there is no great temptation to attend his first appearance at any time but in the finest months; for cold and comfortless are the mornings of autumn and winter long after he is above the horizon; and I own I am not one of those who have resolution to encounter the chill gloom of very early hours at those seasons, though no one is, perhaps, more sensible of the value of time, and very few have more occupations of necessity to fill it. We must now, however, make use of that immediately

* Milton.

before

before us. The chaises are, I see, waiting on the cliff.

Elizabeth. And now then we must bid adieu! a reluctant adieu to the sea!

Henrietta. Ah! when shall we see it again, and have the pleasure of walking again on the sands, and of enjoying such delightful mornings as we have had here?

Mrs. Woodfield. We shall revisit it again, I hope, before the end of summer; and in the mean time you will find amusement enough in the various scenes to which you are going.

They now proceeded on their journey, which lay across the country; for having some business with a lawyer at a town about twenty miles distant, and wishing to visit a very old lady, a friend of her mother's, who resided there, Mrs. Woodfield took this opportunity of doing both. This road, therefore, led them over a tract of country, where two

E 3 counties

counties joined in the boundaries of what was once a royal chace, and was still crown land—a sort of heathy wild, where, amidst scattered woods and shrubby glens, a few poor cottages were thinly dispersed.

The road was not such as admitted of much speed, and they were not in haste, but beguiled the time in remarks on the uncultivated beauty which the landscape, rude as it was, every where presented, at a season when the banks were covered with multitudes of flowers, and the hedges above them unfolding their first leaves. A few insects already dared to venture forth amid the capricious winds of April.

On observing one or two of these, Henrietta, cried—“ Oh ! there are some of those yellow butterflies with a small crimson spot on each wing, which I remember, mamma, you told me, were called cucumber flies, from their colour
resembling

resembling the blossoms of that plant; but to me they seem more like a flying primrose."

Mrs. Woodfield. Your idea pleases me. One could, indeed, almost fancy one of them to be a primrose or an oxlip, loosened from its stalks, animated and flying through the air. You have been lately reading, I think, that the wisdom of God is evident, even in the colours with which he has clothed the birds and insects as means to preserve them from those other animals who would otherwise too easily devour them. This early butterfly is clad, you see, in colours nearly resembling the flowers that now cover every bank, on the honey of which it lives. Recollect in how many other instances this happens, though it is an observation we do not think of making. In India, the birds and the insects are infinitely brighter and more vivid in their colours than in

E 4 Europe;

Europe; so are the blossoms of the trees, and the flowers among which they live and feed. With us the grasshopper, and many caterpillars and other small insects are green, and are concealed by resembling the grass and leaves. The partridge is soberly clad like the stubbles and fallows among which it lives, while the burnished pheasant conceals his crimson eye and changeable neck among the tawny and deep-coloured leaves of the autumnal wood. The hare too, who has so many enemies, has clothing very nearly resembling the hollow sandbanks and brown furrows among which she hides herself, and as you remember Thomson says,

“ Of the same tawny hue, the wither'd fern :”
while the domestic animals, those more immediately under the management and protection of man, assume variety of colours, as no longer needing the sort of safety they derive from uniformity of colour

colour among fields and forests. All these remarks, my dear girls, which from our habits of life and course of reading and thinking occur to us, are probably never present to those who live in what is called general society; that is, who never arise but to prepare for some morning party, or return from it but to dress themselves for the amusement of the evening.

Elizabeth. And I dare say, my dear mamma, those persons condemn such reflections as useless, and mighty dull and uninteresting.

Mrs. Woodfield. I believe they do; but let us, my love, follow in idea one of these trifling characters, who have no other pursuits than those which arise from mixing in what are called the pleasures of fashionable life; let us follow one of them to the obscurity to which the failure of her plan of procuring a rich

a rich husband, mortified pride, and reduced fortune condemns her. Alas! what can be so melancholy! I suppose such a person, neglected and forlorn, retiring to some cheap provincial town, where she supposes her very moderate fortune may allow her still to enjoy some of the pleasures of society, and to finish her life, as such a life is described by the poet;

“ A youth of folly, an old age of cards.”

Alas! however well she may be received by the parties who form the society of the place where she is fixed, she cannot always be at the card-table. The matrons, who surround them of an evening, have their families to attend to during the day, and not unfrequently bad weather, illness, accident, or petty misunderstandings and squabbles, with which such associations do lamentably abound, deny even the reviving rubber of the evening! What then becomes of
the

the unfortunate, isolated being, who not having any resources within herself, is wholly dependent on others for the means of passing the dreary evenings of winter? She has never been accustomed to read, or -never beyond the flimsy pages of a novel. If she attempts to occupy her mind with one of these, she meets with the description of scenes in which she can no longer hope to bear a part, and sickens at the representation of even imaginary happiness. She has no taste for works of fancy, and has been taught to believe that useful work is beneath her. Desponding and sad, therefore, her spirits recoil upon themselves and wear themselves out. Internally wretched, she becomes dissatisfied with the felicity of others, and gives way to all that envious malignity which embitters society; whereas, if this person had been accustomed early in life to rational pursuits, if her mind had been

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strength-

strengthened and her views enlarged, she would have been happy in herself, useful and agreeable in society; and would have rather contributed to the satisfaction of all around her, than have suffered additional misery because she believes others more content.

Henrietta. I am sure I should hate such a cross old woman. I know who I think just such a one; she hates children, and scolded me one day for gathering some flowers that were in her garden, though I know she did not care about them herself.

Mrs. Woodfield. I will have no remarks directed against this individual, Henrietta; nor ought you to pretend to judge whether she cared for the flowers or no. If in the instance you named she reproved you, the reproof was certainly merited, for it is extremely rude to gather the flowers in any garden where you may happen to be admitted.

Henrietta.

Henrietta. Ah! well mamma, I know very well that you would not have been angry in the same case.

Mrs. Woodfield. I assure you I should not have been pleased; for example, if any one were to gather some curious and sweet flower, that I had been nursing all the year, just as it began to bloom and to diffuse its odours, I should certainly be vexed, and might, perhaps, express my vexation.

Elizabeth. I must say, however, mamma, that the lady my sister means cared nothing about the flowers, and said a great deal more than was necessary on such a trifle; she almost said that you humoured us too much in such sort of things, and . . .

Mrs. Woodfield. I wish not to hear what she said, my dear; nor do I approve of that very frequent but mischievous custom too often thoughtlessly adopted, of telling to one person what
another

another says of them; nothing is more apt to create disputes, coldness, and aversion, yet I know nothing in which people more frequently indulge themselves. This is sometimes the effect of malice, and sometimes of our zealous friendship. Indirect flattery, conveyed in this manner by officious friends, is said, and I believe with truth, to be of every manner of conveying flattery the most dangerous. Never, therefore, accustom yourselves to repeat to any of your friends the blame or even the praise you may hear of them. I have known girls flattered into the most insufferable vanity by one another—"Oh! my sweet Sophy," cries Matilda, "you cannot guess what I heard of you last night."—"My *dear* Matilda," replies Sophy, "do *pray* tell me; I am dying to know; not that it *could* be half so much in my praise as what Mr. such-a-one and Captain such-a-one said of you

12 when

when you were dancing." The self-love of each being thus gratified, the misses become more and more fond of each other; and I once knew two girls who went very much into the same set of company, that regularly met to compare notes, and became two of the most insolent, affected, and vain creatures I ever met with. It happened that in the course of events they were separated, and did not meet again for some years, and when they did, their former intimacy, for I cannot call it friendship, was turned into rivalry; instead then of mutually flattering, they found a malignant delight in depreciating each other; and then it was the business of some of their acquaintance to tell each of them how the other said she was altered; so that it was hard to say whether their early youth was more disfigured by the vanity which they mutually created, or their maturer

maturer years made hateful by envy and detraction.

Elizabeth. I will take care, my dear mamma, never to be guilty of this.

Henrietta. And I will, I assure you, as carefully avoid offending any body by taking their flowers whether they care for them or no; though I own I am sadly tempted sometimes. Pray tell me, is there a pretty garden at the lady's house we are going to?

Mrs. Woodfield. A very good garden, but one of those which are cultivated more for use than beauty. My friend Mrs. Doddington is arrived at that advanced period of life when she is no longer able to enjoy her garden, for age and infirmity confine her entirely to the house.

Henrietta. Poor woman! how much she must regret that she is not able to go into her garden!

Mrs.

Mrs. Woodfield. You think so, because you would regret it; but before the eyes of persons of the age of my good old friend, the seasons have revolved, and the various scenes of life have passed till there is no longer novelty or interest in them.

Elizabeth. But you have told me, mamma, that this lady is nevertheless cheerful and contented.

Mrs. Woodfield. I have so; and when you see her you will allow that she is still amiable and agreeable. This is the effect of a well regulated mind, and is the best proof of a well spent youth.

Elizabeth. Mrs. Doddington has grand children.—Are any of them with her?

Mrs. Woodfield. No; they are all grown up, and the young ladies are all married. But our short stay at C—— will not fail to be enlivened by the society

society of young persons. There is a Miss Sourby, you know, the daughter of the gentleman with whom I have business. He is an attorney, or solicitor, a man who has made a great deal of money in his profession, and having lately held a public character in his native town, has been knighted on carrying up an address. He has a son, who is reckoned remarkably *clever*, and is now in the militia, having left the pen for the spontoon; while I am assured Miss Sourby, his sister, is one of the most accomplished girls in the county.

Henrietta. Oh! for my part, I do not desire any new acquaintance; I only wish I may be allowed to stay all day in the garden.

Mrs. Woodfield. That will hardly be, my Henrietta; but however, as we shall have no morning tasks, nor readings, you will of course have more
time

time for your garden rambles than at home; and at your age, and at this lovely season there is, perhaps, no society that can afford so much pleasure as some of those simple scenes which you recollect are thus described as belonging to peasants and peasant children :

“ Midst gloomy glades in warbles clear

“ Wild nature's sweetest notes they hear;

“ On green untrodden banks they view

“ The hyacinth's neglected hue;

“ In their lone haunts and woodland rounds

“ They spy the squirrel's airy bounds;

“ And startle from her ashen spray

“ Across the glen the screaming jay * !”

• Thomas Warton.

DIALOGUE V.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS.

[Scene—At the house of the friend to whom they were making a visit, at an early hour of the morning; Mrs. Woodfield meeting her eldest daughter.]

Mrs. Woodfield.

WELL, Elizabeth, we recommence our journey to-day. Are you prepared to take a long farewell of your friends here?

Elizabeth. Friends! my dear mamma?

Mrs. Woodfield. Well then, if that is too strong a word, I will say your acquaintance. The term, friend, indeed, is one of those we are too apt to misuse.

Elizabeth. You have so often cautioned me, mamma, against sudden and violent intimacies with people of my own age, that you know I never hastily
form

form them, even with those who appear to me agreeable; but as for Miss Rudworth . . .

Mrs. Woodfield. You have found no necessity in regard to her to recollect my advice.

Elizabeth. Oh dear! no; none in the world. You oblige me, however, to remember what you have so often said, as to the indulgence of a satirical disposition; and therefore, mamma, I shall only say of Miss Rudworth, that I wish her very well and very happy, but I shall not be sorry if I am never to see her again.

Mrs. Woodfield. Thus it is then, that those accomplishments, acquired at such an expence, and by the unwearied application of so many years, serve only to render this young person disagreeable! How is it that she has contrived this?

Elizabeth. Oh! you know very well, mamma, that a girl who knew only to
read

read and write her own language, who was unassuming and simple in her manners, and did not affect to be more than her neighbours, would be ten thousand times more agreeable.

Mrs. Woodfield. I entirely agree with you; and I should see with real concern these good people, her father and mother, so sadly mistaken, but that their error makes them so happy, it would be cruel to attempt undeceiving them. They believe that a very loud noise is music, that red, green, and blue blots are fine drawings, and that the scraps of broad French and common place phrases in Italian, which *their Frances* utters on all occasions, indicate a most enviable knowledge of languages. All this, as they are people who were originally in very humble life and have had no education themselves, would be very pardonable and would only excite a smile; but when they oppress their visitors
with

with such an ostentatious parade of their daughter's acquirements, and affect to look with insulting pity on those who have not had the means of procuring such an exuberance of accomplishments, one is half tempted to mortify their ill-placed pride.

Elizabeth. Yes, mamma; I wish you had done so, instead of sitting so quietly while we were really stunned.

Mrs. Woodfield. No, Elizabeth; I am too conscious of my weakness in a thousand instances about my own children to have the cruelty *so* to mortify the partial fondness of any person towards their's; besides, I believe these good folks are very likely to impute any such unwelcome truths to envy. They were once greatly my inferiors in point of fortune; and then I recollect the *now* Lady Rudworth, at that time emerging into a sort of third style of gentility, gave me credit for some knowledge

knowledge in the management of what she called *ejewcasson*; and consulted me about that of her daughter, assuring me "it was a circumstance she had much at heart." Now she is much richer than I am; and I do not blame her for supposing she has therefore much more knowledge.

Elizabeth. Disagreeable, proud woman! but as to that vain impertinent ..

Mrs. Woodfield. Moderate your anger, my dear child. If you indulge such violent indignation against all the people you meet, whose self consequence is equally offensive, you will spoil your own temper; but the world will go on just as it did before. Why should I quarrel with Lady Rudworth, for feeling her imaginary superiority? She has no idea of any other than that which money gives, and to get money has been the purpose of her's and her husband's lives. She has now you see a *title* too, and can

you

you wonder that she feels and enjoys her elevation?

Elizabeth. But should this person give herself airs of superiority which insult all who are so unfortunate as to be in her company?

Mrs. Woodfield. Certainly not; but the same obscurity in the beginning of her life which now causes her acquired riches to be so dazzling, is also the cause why she cannot disguise the triumph of her heart. It is to conceal the good opinion we have of ourselves, that the forms which are called *good breeding* are inculcated and submitted to; a practice with which Lady Rudworth has had very little to do, and which it is now too late to acquire. A celebrated essayist says: *That were the door opened to self-praise, and were Montaigne's maxim observed, that one should say, as frankly, "I have sense, I have learning, I have courage, beauty, or wit," as 'tis sure we*
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often think so ; were this the case, such a flood of impertinence would break in upon us as would render society wholly intolerable.

But the sort of forbearance thus agreed upon in polished society, Lady Rudworth has never seen practised where she has lived ; I mean among people which could only be called the upper rank of low life ; and therefore, she takes no trouble to disguise her opinion of that superiority which she believes her money gives her, among those she now converses with. And I observe that this overbearing self-sufficiency is almost always visible in people who have become suddenly rich, and are raised above the narrow circle where they originally moved. So that there is no reflection more common than that of “ such a one is purse-proud.”

There is a variation in this foible, which I have sometimes seen, though
it

it seldom is assumed by the lady of the family, but is usually confined to the founder of it: I mean, when a person very fond of talking of his fortune finds an excuse for doing so in affected humility. Such a man will say: "though it has pleased God to bless my honest industry—I began the world with nothing," and such sort of cant. Our friend Sir Randall Rudworth, however, is not of this class. Of *honest* endeavours he can say but little, and therefore wisely sinks the cause of his elevation, well content to make the most of its effects. Far from any humble allusions to his birth, he shrinks from the mention of it; has lately affected to talk of his family as having been long seated in a northern county; has sent to the Heralds Office for arms, which are cut on his seal and painted on his carriage; and you see his daughter is educated to support all these pretensions;

for what will not a great deal of money effect?

Elizabeth. I know what it will not effect, mamma. It will never give to Miss Rudworth the look or the manners of a gentlewoman.

Mrs. Woodfield. That is mere matter of opinion, Elizabeth. There are few, with whom she is likely to have much intercourse at present, who can distinguish between finery and elegant neatness, between the pertness of arrogance and the ease of good breeding. In general, I believe, the world gives those, who are in undoubted affluence, credit for as many other advantages as they choose to assume. You see with what a decided air Mrs. Modbury talks of every thing; dashes into an hundred absurdities, and affects to be even scientific. It is impossible there can exist a woman more ignorant; yet she is not only tolerated, but admired and looked

up

up to. Her sole qualifications are, a great deal of assurance, supported by the consciousness of having a rich husband, a loud voice, and a very fashionable or fanciful way of dressing. All these adopted by Miss Rudworth, and added to her *accomplishments*, will have (you may be assured) the very same effect; but a rational being can never consider either of them as objects of envy or imitation.

Elizabeth. I am sure those people, on whom such airs would impose, must be very blind or stupid.

Mrs. Woodfield. Not at all; for by what criterion do superficial observers judge, unless by outward appearances? There are very few of the people, with whom one has occasion to converse every day in the common intercourse of life, who do not suppose, that if a person is very well dressed she is a person of fortune; and, on the contrary,

that she who is clothed with extreme simplicity is not able to purchase ornaments.

I once saw a laughable proof of this. Some years ago I happened to be at a public bathing place; it was late in the year, and I was to pass the winter in the country; which at that period of my life I did not think of with very great philosophy. The day, however, was come when I was to go, and in a melancholy mood I set forth early in the morning, to pay a small bill for some ball fineries at a very fashionable milliner's newly set up in the place, and to purchase the few trifles I was likely to have occasion for in my winter seclusion.

While I was settling these matters, a lady, very plainly dressed, and with an hat on which was particularly old fashioned, entered the shop, and asked for a pair of gloves.

The

The milliner took down a parcel, threw them carelessly on the counter, and with very little ceremony left her customer to choose for herself, while turning again to me, who was but a girl at that time, she went on measuring the ribbands I had chosen. The lady very quietly fitted herself with a pair of gloves, paid her money, and departed without having received from the shopwoman even the curtesy usual on such occasions.

As I knew perfectly well who she was, and thought that her tall striking figure must have made her equally well known to Mrs. Tiffany, I was surprized at this rudeness, and could not help asking if she knew who she took that lady to be? "Indeed," replied she, "I never saw her before. It is none of the company staying here, but I suppose some *little* country gentlewoman of the neighbourhood."

"I believe," said I, "you are very much mistaken; that lady is the Dutchess of _____."

I wish I could describe the woman's face. She coloured as red as the ribband she was folding; then became pale, and at last said, "Oh, my heavens! how rude I have been; but who could have thought of a person of fashion so early in a morning? and in such a dress too? and with such a hat? Dear me! what had I better do? perhaps, I had best go after her Grace, and beg her pardon."

As I was too young to advise, and my business was finished, I left Mrs. Tiffany to settle the affair as she could, not sorry, however, for the lesson she had received, never to trust altogether to appearances, or to behave with insolence to her customers, on account of an unfashionable hat, or upon suspicion of their being "little country gentlewomen."

But

But I mention this circumstance as one among the thousands that daily occur, how much common observers, who undoubtedly make up more than two thirds of the world, are influenced by appearance.

Elizabeth. Well, if respect is to be acquired by finery, there is no doubt of Miss Rudworth's being highly respected.

Mrs. Woodfield. But you, I trust, my love, will never envy any one respect that is paid merely on that account. It can give pleasure only to very weak minds, and with such you may remark, that to dazzle by superfluous personal ornament, by equipage, or a number of servants, is generally a ruling passion. Every thing that is convenient, all that rank demands should be complied with; but ostentatious display, only to excite envy and to make the vulgar stare, always marks some weakness of character. It

has often been said of those who have made themselves remarkable for this extravagance, and have frequently been ruined by it, that they committed folly only to obtain the applause of fools. But I see Henrietta in the garden, and I conclude from thence that every thing is ready for our departure. Look how little Ella is enjoying herself this warm day, like one of the butterflies she pursues—as thoughtless and as happy.

We have now only to take our leave; for, luckily, my business with Sir Randall is as near being concluded as it can be for some time; and, I hope, in such a state as to prevent the necessity of my personally troubling him again.

The carriages being now at the door, and the travellers having taken leave of their acquaintance, without any regret on either side, they again proceeded on their way, which was that day to be only to the distance of twelve miles. They

were

were to remain at the house of another friend of Mrs. Woodfield's, (who was a native of that part of the country,) and the next morning to visit two objects of curiosity in the neighbourhood, and, as the days were long, to reach London the same evening.

As they went, Elizabeth (who now travelled in the post-chaise with her mother alone) could not help renewing the conversation of the morning.

Elizabeth. I wish, mamma, my cousin Caroline had been with us on this visit. She is so much superior to that Miss Rudworth in person, and knows so much more, that it would have mortified the conceited girl delightfully.

Mrs. Woodfield. I by no means wish it on that account. I am not so sure that your cousin's superiority would have mortified Miss Rudworth, because I doubt whether it would have been

allowed, while I have doubts how far Caroline would have submitted, with that complacent indifference which it ought to meet with, to this assumed superiority.

Elizabeth. I am sure she would have said that, what we were compelled to hear and see of *accomplishments*, was enough to give one a surfeit of them for ever.

Mrs. Woodfield. She would have said a very foolish thing then. But thus it ever is, that the abuse of good brings the good itself into reproach. It seems to me, that nothing is more desirable, to young persons of fortune especially, than a certain degree of perfection in the ornamental parts of education; because they afford a number of resources in the hours of solitude and retirement, produce new ideas, and form the taste. But I do not think their attainment should be the first purpose of early life,

or

or that they should be cultivated, as they often are, where nature has denied the talents necessary to their acquisition. There is nothing in my opinion so requisite to happiness, which is the end of all instruction, as good temper and good sense. Where these are wanting, the rest appears to be like high varnish on a bad picture, serving only to make the faults more visible.

I never yet saw the highest advancement in what are called accomplishments, make a young woman esteemed or beloved, where good temper and good sense were missing; whereas those blessings alone, without any adventitious advantages, will enable a person to go through the world with honor to herself, and as the delight and comfort of their friends; for alas! my dear girl, there are in the most fortunate families, and in the course of the most prosperous life, many scenes and many hours, when
music

music ceases to charm the ear, and painting to engage the eye; when the sickening spirit, or the wounded heart turn from the trifles which might amuse a vacant hour, to seek the patient pity of sympathising friendship, to one who can sustain our reason and strengthen our fortitude.

To regulate the temper, therefore, and form the judgment, is in my mind more material than all the accomplishments in the world; and the young person who should give herself entirely to, or value herself immoderately on the merely ornamental parts of education, would act with as little sense as she would do, who, having heard fringe or lace reckoned additions to her clothes, should therefore determine to make the whole of no other materials.

DIALOGUE VI.

MAY DAY.

WHILE the party were yet at such a distance from London as not to have entered on that line of country where the luxury of improvement has destroyed the wilder features of nature, Mrs. Woodfield, who, by the sentiments she had delivered in the preceding conversation, had never meant to discourage that taste for the imitative powers of the pencil to which she had been herself often indebted for amusement in her vacant hours, and for beguiling the lighter evils of life, took occasion as they journeyed on, to point out to her attentive auditors, now all with her in a coach sent by the Colonel, the particular features of the country through which

which they passed, which were obvious as subjects for landscapes.

The road lay for some length at the foot of a rocky elevation; and sometimes through an hollow way, formed by the rocks rising abruptly on each side.

Mrs. Woodfield. How beautifully green is every blade of grass and every small plant that find sustenance amid the sandy excavations of these rocks. No objects make better fore grounds than these rude precipices, nor throw off to better advantage the distant landscapes. But were a painter to represent a view, clothed in the emerald green that now almost dazzles the sight, his picture would be glaring and displeasing: yet nothing can be more harmonious and beautiful than the reality.

The contrast too of these yellow masses of sand-stone has a pleasing effect, varied and dressed as they are with shrubs and flowers; their summits crowned

crowned with the broom and white thorn, intermingled sometimes with pollard oaks or tufts of young ash or beach trees, whose roots, often forced from the hollow rock beneath, wreath into the most fantastic forms, and the projections they form, afford places of growth for the female fern, the small blue campanula, to two sorts of wild geranium, to the veronia, and in moist and shady parts of the rock, to the wood sorrel; white violets, too, often lurk among these uncultivated beds of wild flowers, excelling them all in sweetness. But these and many other small plants are rather the pursuit of the botanist than the landscape painter, who ought, however, in drawing these rocky scenes, to catch the forms, though he cannot minutely describe the long tangling branches of the blackberry; the festoons of briony woodbine, nightshade,

or

or wild hop, that creep or flaunt
among the rugged hollows.

Elizabeth. For my part, though I
know one ought never to despair of any
thing, yet I sometimes fear I shall never
do trees well; since even my cousin
Caroline allows that they are the most
difficult.

Mrs. Woodfield. Students in drawing
certainly often fail in them, and even
masters do not always succeed. Perhaps
this may be partly owing to their study-
ing in countries which produce only
one sort of tree. You know there are
many parts of England, where you may
travel many miles and see nothing but
the dark elm, too often spoiled by the
loss of its side branches; and you re-
member, when we were looking over
the edition of Spenser's *Fairy Queen*,
published by Kent, we remarked that
Prince Arthur, the red cross knight,

Una,

Una, Dueſſa, and Belpheobe, and in ſhort all the perſonages of the various allegory, appear under the ſhade, or amid landſcapes adorned with young elm trees. The reaſon of this want of taſte and variety is, that Kent, who made the drawings, was an improver of lands, parks, and gardens, and in that occupation had occaſion to contrive and to obſerve continual plantations of that tree, to which his eye ſeemed to have been ſo familiariſed that he forgot there were any others in nature. From the ſame cauſe it probably is, that diſtances in many Italian landſcapes preſent nothing but the ſpiry form of the cypreſs which abounds in Italy: and in a few years the views in England will preſent the ſame pyramidal groups; for the Lombardy poplars, now ſo generally planted, have nearly the ſame effect.

Elizabeth.

Elizabeth. I love to draw pieces of rocks and old trees better than cottages, for it is not often one finds one that is not too formal.

Mrs. Woodfield. On paper, however, we may *destroy* as well as *raise* structures to our taste; and it is not difficult to dismantle one of the most comfortable cottages, till we render it tolerably *picturesque*, to use the phrase adopted on the occasion; then we can add the haystack, or a few hop-poles leaning on its roof, shadow it with the pendent boughs of the beech or chestnut, or contrive to hide half the small casement in the thatch, with the grotesque branches of an old fruit tree. But water, I think, as often baffles the learner as trees, at least the most pleasing representation of water, when it gushes out of one of these rocks, or starts from among the dark shades of a steep wood; such as you know are in our country distinguished

guished by the name of hangers. When we have thus chosen the features and composed our little home landscape, we must find figures appropriated to the scenery; and look! at this moment, there is a group that Gainsborough himself would have chosen; see, Henrietta, that little party, seated on a kind of circular bench, formed of a mound of earth, confined by woven osiers and covered with turf, under a maypole.

Henrietta. Three little girls dressing a boy's hat with flowers; and what a quantity of flowers they have got in their baskets!

Mrs. Woodfield. What if we stop and purchase of them some of their garlands; or at least make them some little present, to increase the pleasure of their infantine festival?

Henrietta and Ella. Oh! do let us!

(This done, they proceed.)
Elizabeth.

Elizabeth. Well! we have made these poor children very happy however.

Henrietta. I wish we could have staid to, have seen them dance. Pray tell me, mamma, whether there are now such dances of shepherds and shepherdeses as one reads of in songs and poems; where they choose a queen of the May, and all the houses are dressed, and all the ways strewn with flowers?

Mrs. Woodfield. No, Henrietta; I believe these pastoral festivals exist no where now but in description, yet some remains of them are left among the infant peasantry, of which we have just had an instance in the children we have seen, happy heirs of laborious poverty; who, obtaining a very scanty subsistence, want no more, and find amidst the fields and coppices their slender *desert*,

“Like the gay birds that sing them to repose.”

There you see rob the meadows and
cottage

cottage gardens, to furnish their sole finery, and on this eleventh of May (when, according to the prejudice of their grandmothers, they observe May-day as it fell in the old style) the happy party sallies forth, feeling, perhaps, as much delight as they are capable of expressing; for now, released for some months from the confinement necessarily imposed upon them in dark and dirty cottages by the weather, by the snow, tempests, and floods of winter, they are at liberty to enjoy the only luxury they know, that of wandering among the meadows and woods, which offer to these simple children of nature so many charms; and though certainly incapable of describing, or perhaps incapable of discriminating what they feel, yet it is theirs, more free from care and from restraint than the favourites of affluence, to enjoy what some

some poet (I have forgot who) so well describes:

“ By vale or brook to loiter; not displeas’d
 “ Hear the streams pebbled roar, and the sweet bee
 “ Humming his fairy tunes in praise of flowers.”

And I am persuaded the finest dress on a royal birth-day, covers not an heart so gay and happy as any of those we have just left.

Elizabeth. But I should like to see some of the rural balls, which one learns to fancy so pleasant from ballads or from poems.

Mrs. Woodfield. Yes; such as even the great and grave Milton teaches us to fancy, when he concludes an address to May morning, by saying,

“ Thus we salute thee with our early song,
 “ And welcome thee, and wish thee long !”

But such choruses of shepherds and of nymphs, are with us never heard; and the May is welcomed only by the

younger villagers, who have, perhaps, a few garlands on the May-pole or about the sign-post of the ale-house of the hamlet.

Nothing, certainly, is more misrepresented than the scenes of rural festivity; those assemblies of pastoral felicity,

“When young and old come out to play,

“On a sun-shine holiday;”

for in our times, neither young nor old, who are capable of work, can lose a day of labour. These descriptions were perhaps very just when Theocritus wrote of the lives of Sicilian shepherds; but they have no resemblance to the manners of England.

Even at this distance of time I well recollect how greatly disappointed I was when, being about eleven or twelve years old, I was first shewn a shepherd. Having taken my ideas from songs, where Strephon meets Phillis and pre-

sents her with a lamb dressed with roses and woodbines, or from the Chelsea China figures, which at that time adorned many apartments, I had supposed a shepherd to be a personage elegantly attired, in a pea-green jacket, a silk hat crowned with hyacinths, followed by a beautiful little dog, his crook ornamented with ribands, and charming the echos by the sound of his flageolet: instead of which I saw a stout rough-looking clown, whose hair seemed bleached in the pinching storms to which he was exposed; he was clad in a coarse jacket of tanned leather, very much patched; concealed, however, partly by a thick white woollen great coat; his hat was tied on with a red handkerchief, and he was followed by an ugly shagg-ear'd dog, whose continual and hoarse barking constituted all the music of this rude and solitary pair.

I said

I said to myself; How is it possible this can be a shepherd? Where then are the beings described by Pope, by Shenstone, by Hammond, and Lord Littleton; the Paridels, Damons, and Corydons? Alas! such, in a thousand more material instances; is the mortifying difference between the pictures of life we are shewn and the sad realities we are obliged to accept. In these drawings it may well be said that

“ Airy dreams

“ Sat for the picture, and the poet's hand,

“ Imparting substance to an empty shade,

“ Imposed a gay delirium for a truth.”

Yet there is still felicity enough in moral scenery and rural employments, to depress with deep regret the poor exile, who, forced from his or her native village to seek a precarious subsistence among the stifling crouds of a great city, languishes for “liberty and fresh air;”

“ Cowper.

and till the body becomes enervated, as the mind insensibly loses its taste for the pleasures of simple nature, casts many a longing, lingering look towards these fondly remembered haunts of early content.

One remarkable instance of this I will relate to you. It would make my story outlast this stage of our journey, were I to tell at length the unfortunate accidents which occasioned a poor girl, Lydia Meadows, who had been brought up with great care and tenderness by her grandmother, to be left, at the death of her ancient protectress, an helpless and destitute orphan; and though she had been taught to expect, and really ought to have had a small provision from the effects of this her last surviving relation, yet they had fallen into such hands, that, as old Mrs. Meadows was not of the parish, or even a native of the county where she was settled when death overtook her, the

the overseers were alarmed lest her orphan grandchild, then between thirteen and fourteen, should become burthen some to them; and inquiring out her relations, (which were very few,) they found only one man, a tin-plate-worker in Long Acre, willing to give himself any trouble about her. The rest, having found, on inquiry, that the grandmother had left nothing, declined having any concern with one so little likely to become a profitable inmate as the unfortunate Lydia.

The tin-man, having either more humanity or for some other reason, undertook to find some person who would receive his young relation for a very small premium as an apprentice, and the overseers having possessed themselves of all her grandmother's effects, which remained after the rapacity of the first plunderers, had raised a sum which they determined should be enough for

this purpose. Poor Lydia, therefore, who had never heard an harsh word till now, or known a fear or a difficulty, was put into a stage-coach with a little bundle of clothes, and left to find her way as well as she could from a town in Devonshire to an inn in London, where, however, she was told her cousin (whom she had never seen in her life) was to meet her.

A woman, going from the same town to visit her friends at Salisbury, promised to take care of her so far: to her the unhappy girl clung as to her last friend; and the woman, affected with her innocent tears, staid to see her get into the stage that was to proceed from thence to London; and telling her story and the helplessness of her situation to a decent looking person who said she was going to Turnham Green, she recommended Lydia to her care, while the poor girl felt herself more forlorn and
deserted

deserted than before, as she took leave of her only acquaintance.

Insensibly, however, her new friend gained her confidence; and in the simplicity of her heart, she told her a short and mournful story. The woman in her turn pretended to relate her own, and gave herself of course a very good character; so that the poor girl believing she had found another friend, entreated her to come to see her in London, and assured her, that if she could get leave she would find her out and renew her acquaintance; from whom, however, when she came to the place of her destination, she was compelled to part. It was late before the coach Lydia was in arrived at the place where it was finally to deliver the passengers and parcels, and as she proceeded through the streets, the noises, the lights, all she saw and heard, was so new and so distracting, that she had hardly cou-

rage to look forward to what she yet had to encounter—a meeting with a relation on whom she was now in some measure to depend.

But far more dreadful was her situation than she had feared to find it; for on arriving at the inn, there was no person there to receive her, and what was still worse, when the packages came to be taken out of the coach, her's, in which was all her worldly goods and the direction whither she was to go, was not to be found. The coachman, seeing he had only a helpless child to deal with, loudly protested it had never been put into his care; and now poor Lydia, friendless and penniless, and in a place so new and frightfully strange as a dark and dirty room at such an inn, felt herself so oppressed, so terrified, and so totally at a loss what to do, that, unable even to weep, she sat down in the first chair she could

could find, and remained there like a statue. A number of men came in and went out, each busied about his own concerns, but nobody noticed her. It grew late. The bustle at the door made by the arrival of coaches subsided, and unnoticed, yet without courage to speak; the unhappy girl remained torpid; terror combining with fatigue to deprive her even of the little resolution or presence of mind which might at her age be expected.

At length one of the runners of the inn coming in to see for somebody, was returning on finding the room as he supposed empty; for Lydia, wrapped in her black cloak, and with her bonnet drawn over her face, was hardly visible; when some slight motion she made in attempting to speak occasioned him to observe her, and approaching, he asked her rudely who she was, and what she wanted there?

The trembling girl related, as well as she could, whence she came and what had befallen her; and fortunately the man to whom she spoke was not so destitute of humanity as persons in his condition of life frequently are. He studied a moment what was to be done, and then called a female servant of the inn, who, after making some difficulties, agreed to let the poor child have a bed there that night, and told her that as she knew the name of her relation, and that he lived in or near Long Acre, she might easily find him in the morning. Even this accommodation, poor as it was, seemed such a relief to the harassed spirits of the desolate orphan, that she was now able to shed tears; her casual protectors, moved to more lively compassion by these unaffected symptoms of distress, gave her some refreshment, and the woman put her into a truckle bed in a garret next to her own. But such were the fear and
terror

terror with which her late deplorable situation and this first view of London had impressed her, that not even the great fatigue she had gone through disposed her to sleep; and with the first dawn of the morning she got up, dressed herself as well as she could, and with fearful steps sought the woman to whose pity she owed it that she had not passed the night in the street.

As the pleasurable sensation arising from the consciousness of having done one good action often induces those, little accustomed to general benevolence, to continue their kindness and do a second; the maid of the inn seemed to have taken poor Lydia into her protection, and finding how ignorant she was, and that she might be lost in the streets if sent out alone, contrived to procure the attendance of a boy who waited about the door of the inn; and under

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his

his guidance, Lydia set out to find her cousin.

The streets, for it was mid winter, were so dirty, and the way seemed so long, that fatigue and anguish again took possession of her heart. At length she found the shop, over which was written the name she sought. She entered faint and breathless, but the horrible clatter made by three men who were at work in it, completed her consternation; her attendant already departed, who, ragged and dirty as he was, seemed preferable to the grim creatures she saw hammering around her; and, fearing she knew not what, she was about to return to the street, when one of the men ceasing to hammer, asked her what she would have, and with some difficulty she repeated the name of Lydia Meadows.

The

The man, who had now a confused notion that this was the young woman his master expected from the country, called him, and Lydia soon beheld ascend from a cellar that had an issue into the shop, a tall black figure, with his shirt stripped up to his shoulders, who putting forth a great sooty hand, asked how she came there; told her he was going at night to meet her; and then bade her follow him to his good woman. Lydia, hardly knowing what she did, was preceded by her uncouth relation into a little dark room behind the shop, where she was introduced to a very dirty looking fat woman, whose hair half powdered hung about her ears—the remains of her Sunday's finery. She seemed very little delighted with the arrival of her husband's relation: observed, that she had no notion of seeing such a tall girl, and asked if she was sick? what made her look so

white? and where her box was? It was near half an hour before poor Lydia found strength or courage enough to answer all these questions, and when she had done so, Mrs. Croply was so much discomposed at the thoughts of what was to follow the loss of this country cousin's clothes, which must of course be her husband's providing others, and the mournful voice and faint look of the dejected orphan were so displeasing to her, and seemed to threaten her with so much more trouble than she was disposed to take, that she could neither repress nor conceal her displeasure, even before the unfortunate object of it; but calling to her husband, who had gone back to his work, she began in no very gentle accents to reproach him for the expence he had brought upon himself by his foolish officiousness: The man endeavoured, but in vain, to appease her; and such a reception, the dark and
miserable

miserable hole in which she was confined, and the unceasing clatter of the workmen that rung in her ears, had altogether such an effect on Lydia, that believing she should not long trouble any body, she only begged leave to lie down any where for a few hours; "and then," said she, "as soon as I am able, Madam, but at this moment I really have not strength, I will go again to the place where the coach set me down, and endeavour to procure a passage back to the country from whence I came; where I will work, oh! chearfully work, in the fields for my bread; I will do any thing, indeed; I will, ma'am! not to be any more trouble, or be any farther burthensome to you or Mr. Cropley."

A rude and short answer from the unfeeling woman finished the dialogue; but the wretched girl was allowed to go to the place which had been pro-

vided for her to sleep in, till she went to the Italian trimming maker, near Newport Market, to whom she was to be bound apprentice. Mr. Croply had already received from the overseers of the parish where her grandmother died the apprentice fee; and being, after much murmuring on the part of her female cousin, furnished with a mere change of clothes, she was, on the third day after her arrival, conducted to her new master.

Fortunate young people, who, under the protection of tender and vigilant friends, are secured from every danger and every want, can little imagine the hardships and sufferings of those poor girls in inferior life, who, to obtain a mere existence, toil in the dungeons where such people live in a crowded metropolis. He who is born in the mines is so accustomed to their black glooms, that he does not regret, be-
cause

cause he hardly knows the light of Heaven; so those who first find their existence in the airless and dreary caves where the mechanic dwells in London, have very little idea of any other scene. To poor Lydia it was far otherwise. The lodging occupied by her new master consisted of three wretched rooms in an alley, where hunger and contention added to the horrors of a confinement worse than a prison. The man, an Italian who could speak little or no English, could hardly earn a scanty subsistence by his business; because the article he manufactured was now almost entirely out of fashion. His temper was fierce, vindictive, and unfeeling; and his brutality to his two apprentices could only be exceeded by that which his wife exercised towards himself. She was an English woman, who, believing she had done him a very great honor in marrying him, and having a spirit more violent

violent than his own, not only returned his ill-humour with interest, but often made him petition for an armistice; and so dreadful were these scenes to Lydia, who had never had an idea of such people or such conduct, that if she could have endured the famine and squalid wretchedness she was condemned to live in, the extreme terror with which these quarrels impressed her would alone have determined her to escape at every hazard from such an insupportable condition of life. Her fellow apprentice, though like her taken rather as a drudge than to learn the business, was older than Lydia, and having some relations to whom she could complain, was treated with rather more consideration, and had resources of her own, which seemed to make her lot less pitiable; but Lydia, who, young as she was, by no means wanted sense, soon discovered by her conversation that she

was

was a very bad girl; and though she tried to obtain her confidence, Lydia shrunk from her advances, and found, in being associated with such a person, another reason for the resolution she had taken to quit her wretched abode.

Yet whither could she fly; or to whom could she appeal? To complain to Mr. Croply she knew would be vain; nor had she much less dread of remaining where she was than of going to his house. She had no relations on whom she had any claim, none at all likely to own her or take any trouble about her. At length she thought of the acquaintance she had made between Salisbury and Turnham Green. This woman had said her name was Jacobs, and that she was sister to a reputable tradesman at Kensington; but was to be set down at Turnham Green on a visit to a sister there, who was ill. She had given Lydia her direction, and the poor girl knew

knew so little of the world that she believed it possible for an acquaintance, made in a stage-coach, to feel an interest in her behalf; she thought it certain that Mrs. Jacobs would advise her how to act, so that she might be permitted to return to the hardest labour she could be put to in the country, which was the utmost extent of her ambition. More than two miserable months had passed since her ill-starred journey; and it was now early spring, which happened to be remarkably forward. Lydia saw the sun shine on the walls of her sad prison, and her imagination was busy in fancying how green and strewn with flowers were the fields and the coppices where she used to wander with her little village friends; and these thoughts aggravated all her sufferings by comparison.

In this state of mind, it happened, that she was sent with a parcel of fringe to a warehouse in Pall-mall. When she found

found she was to go out, she determined never to return, and putting all the linen she had into her pockets, she went forth to throw herself on the wide world. All she possessed was a single shilling in her pocket and a piece of gold shaped like an heart and fastened to a riband, which had belonged to her mother, and which she had been accustomed from her infancy to wear round her neck. This, however dear it was to her, (and the last of many other little memorials of the better days of her family which had all been lost with her clothes,) she determined, when pressed by necessity, to sell; and thus slenderly provided, she first delivered the parcel she had been entrusted with, and then inquiring her way to Kensington, quitted the town, which to her had appeared a vast dungeon filled with cruelty, contention, and crimes. When she reached Hyde Park, the beauty of the verdure,
the

the freshness of the air so long untasted, seemed to reanimate her strength, and she thought that if she might only be suffered to wander about at liberty in fields and woods, she should want nothing. The fear, however, of being overtaken and forced back by her cruel master or still more cruel mistress sometimes assailed her, and through apprehension hastened her walk. It was about eleven o'clock when she arrived at Kensington, where she took out the piece of paper on which she had written the direction to her stage-coach acquaintance, and entering the first shop she saw, she inquired for the place and person it described.

No such person was known. Lydia inquired again and again without success. She then wandered round the whole place; but no one of that name was to be heard of. Hunger now made her recollect it was growing late.

Her

Her heart, which had been at first elated with her escape, now sunk cold and hopeless; yet she determined to proceed; and flattering herself there might be some mistake in the direction she had taken, she appeased her hunger with a bun for which she changed her shilling, and went on to Turnham Green.

No Mrs. Jacobs was to be heard of there; indeed there was not in the village such a shop for toys and cutlery as the woman had described her brother to keep. One of the women to whom Lydia applied for information told her, that it was most likely the person she wished to find lived at Brentford; and she even thought that she recollected people of the name. On this slender hope the unhappy pilgrim proceeded, often looking wistfully towards the carriages that passed, and longing to accept of the offers of the drivers of public ones to take her up; but the fear of being

being made to pay all her money deterred her; and though sinking through faintness and fatigue, she went on.

Before she came to Brentford it was five o'clock, and she felt that to support herself much longer was impossible. Her hope however of finding her acquaintance was more remote than ever; but as slowly she moved along the street, she was surprised by the sight of a person before her, who in her figure very much resembled Mrs. Jacobs; but what was still more surprising, this person was clad in an old fashioned but very remarkable chintz gown, which Lydia believed to be the very same that once belonged to her grandmother, and which, as it was to compose a part of her own clothing, had been in the parcel which had been missing from the stage.

A sudden impulse made Lydia spring forward, overtake the woman and look
steadily

steadily in her face:—it was the very same; the good Mrs. Jacobs whom she had relied upon for counsel and protection!

There might be more such gowns in the world, and in the joy of finding her supposed friend, the circumstance was overlooked; Lydia therefore spoke to Mrs. Jacobs, and expressed her pleasure at meeting her, in which her acquaintance was so far from participating, that she declared she never saw her before; wondered at her impertinence in speaking to *her*, and adding, that she believed her a bad and idle girl, and thought such a one ought to be taken up; then she suddenly entered an house of mean appearance and shut the door. The unhappy girl, in the utmost consternation, stood a moment gazing at the place, and the sense of her desolate and forlorn situation struck so forcibly on her mind, that she burst into an agony.

of tears; the town where she was seemed a counterpart to that she had left; instead of a friend she found an enemy; alas! she had found one, who, having robbed, could never forgive her; for such in all ranks is human nature—the wretch, who is conscious of having committed an injury, never pardons the injured; and the deeper the trespass the more inveterate the malignity.

This wretched woman, who was a Jewess, and belonged to a gang that travelled through the country, committing petty frauds and receiving stolen goods, had by her menaces and fierce looks so terrified the poor girl, that as soon as she recollected herself after such an encounter, she thought only of hastening as fast as possible from a place where it was likely to meet her again; and, without any fixed plan, she wandered along the road towards Hounslow, purchasing a little bread at a baker's
to

to appease her hunger. It was now nearly dark, and recollecting the stories she had heard related by the passengers in the coach of robberies and murders, her courage and strength no longer sufficed to support her to pursue the road; and she could but just creep through a gate into a ploughed field by the wayside, where under an hedge, at some distance from it, she threw herself on the ground in despair.

The unhappy pilgrim had not long lain there, before a violent noise on the road renewed all her terrors; she could distinguish among a loud clamour of voices, that a robbery had been committed, and that a party were in pursuit of the robbers. It instantly occurred to her that either the pursued or the pursuers might come into the field where she was; and though it was hardly possible for her to be in a more deplorable situation, the dread of this

made her forget her fatigue; she crept again away, and passing by a gap in the hedge to another field, she saw at a distant side of it a group of buildings which seemed to be the back of a farm yard, for she could discern an haystack and several outhouses. Here then she thought she might obtain more shelter and concealment than in the open field. She approached and listened; every thing seemed still about the enclosure, which was surrounded by sheds, stables, and barns; it opened on one side to the field she was in, and on the other seemed attached to an handsome house and garden. No sound now alarmed the trembling wanderer, for the noises on the road died away in distance; and her spirits being a little recovered, she ventured to look over the gate, and beheld with desiring eyes the straw with which part of the ground and one of the outhouses seemed to be strewn.

strewn. She dreaded however lest dogs should fly out at her; but after listening some time and hearing nothing, she got over the gate, and, in the farthest corner of a hovel quite full of straw, she threw herself down, thankful for such a shelter, and flattering herself she should remain there unseen and unmolested till morning.

Overcome with fatigue, sleep conquered her remaining fears; but she had not enjoyed this relief above an hour or two, before she was again roused to a renewal of all her apprehensions; she peeped from her concealment fearing almost to breathe, and found that the noise which had disturbed her was occasioned by two servants who brought some horses into a stable opposite, where they remained some time; and then, as they quietly departed, poor Lydia returned once more to her repose, rejoicing that she

had thus escaped observation, and not venturing to think on what was to become of her the next day.

Too soon it arrived; and Lydia, suddenly awakened by loud voices very near her, started from her straw, and saw a man with a pitchfork removing it, and so near her, that the next step he made would probably have wounded her; she shrieked, and the man, who seemed to be a sort of under groom, stepped forward, and asked her what she did there? the poor girl was unable to reply; but seeing that she was quite a young person, and did not appear to be a common beggar, he questioned her again with less harshness, and would probably have suffered her quietly to depart, if a fat old coachman had not come up, and huffing the lad in very severe terms for talking to idle wenches, bade her go about her business; telling her, that he knew she belonged to a
gang

gang of gypsies, who not a week before had stolen a sieve and an halter out of the field, while his back was turned only half a minute. Lydia attempted to answer, but could not; and the cholerick, well-fed, old domestic continuing to threaten her, she would have quitted the place, but her feet were so sore, that she could not walk; and pain, fear, and fatigue assailing her at once, she sunk down at the feet of the man, and fainted away.

The coachman had a confused notion, that if the girl was dead, as he firmly believed, and that he was the last person with her, he might be made to answer for it. The groom was already gone, and he therefore waddled away too, and going into the house, related that there was a girl dropped down dead in the farm yard. It happened that Mrs. Derwent, the lady to whom the house belonged, was giving her

her morning orders to her house-keeper in an adjoining room, and hearing part of what the man said, which occasioned a bustle among the other servants, she went herself to inquire what it was; when having heard the coachman's account, she hesitated not a moment to follow him to the place, where poor Lydia still remained apparently lifeless.

Moved by the youth and helpless condition of the pitiable object before her, in whose frame and face famine and sickness were but too visible, the lady directed her to be brought immediately into the house, where such remedies were administered, as recovered her from the fit; but her senses were still wandering; and as it was now certain, from her clothes and general appearance, that she was not a vagabond, they supposed she was some unfortunate young creature, escaped from a sick

room in the access of a fever. Mrs. Derwent had so accustomed her servants to execute cheerfully continual acts of humanity, that each was now eager to obey her orders. Lydia was put to bed in a comfortable servant's room, and an apothecary sent for, who could, however, pronounce nothing. It was two or three days before she was able to give an account of herself, and then she related her short but sad history to Mrs. Derwent with so much simplicity, that instead of casting her off as a runaway, or compelling her to go back to her master, she humanely inquired into the truth of the tale she had heard, and being convinced from the manners of the Italian and his wife, whom she personally visited, that Lydia had not deceived her, she felt so much pity for the orphan girl, and entered so thoroughly into the feelings which drove her to so wrong a step as leaving the apprenticeship

ship she was put to, that she prevailed upon the Italian to give up her indentures on condition of his keeping the fee he had received; and with the hearty consent of her relation, Mrs. Derwent took her into her own family to attend on two amiable girls, her daughters, about the same age as Lydia. With them she has remained now for some years, the most grateful and attached of servants. Her education during the life of her grandmother had been much above what is given to the children of the poor; she possessed a very good understanding, and had received from her first instructress principles of rectitude and religion, which however would hardly at her age have resisted the effect of those bad examples every day before her eyes. Her abhorrence therefore of London, and the regret she felt when remembering the scenes of her happier days, though they led her to an

an action wrong in itself yet proved the most fortunate of her life; and never was humanity more instrumental, than that of Mrs. Derwent, in snatching an helpless creature from destruction. Had she not exerted it so opportunely, it is difficult to say what might have been the consequence to this poor forlorn girl, whose only fault was, that natural wish for fresh air and grassy verdure which habit itself hardly ever stifles, and which such a child, (for Lydia was in truth no more,) who has been brought up amidst woods and wilds, may well be pardoned for feeling to excess, situated as she was.

Henrietta. Oh! my dear mamma, how my heart has ached for her. If you had told me, that at last any evil had befallen her, I do not know when I should have been happy again!

Mrs. Woodfield. You feel, I am sure, for her as an unhappy individual, and perhaps

perhaps with some degree of additional acuteness, because you are conscious, that had *her* severe lot been yours, you would have acted as she did. Thank God, my dear girls, that you are more fortunate, and always consider with particular kindness these helpless children of adversity, very indigent and destitute young women, whom so many calamities await, and who at best have not always the means of living by honest industry, however industriously they may be disposed.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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